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SUBJECT: DAILY SUMMARY OF JAPANESE PRESS 12/15/09

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ARTICLES:

(1) U.S. Embassy deputy chief of mission says low-altitude flights of U.S. military aircraft in Kagoshima linked to reduction of Okinawa's burden

MINAMI NIHON SHIMBUN ONLINE (Full)
10:17, December 15, 2009

With regard to the frequent spotting of U.S. military aircraft stationed at U.S. bases in Okinawa flying at low altitude in Kagoshima Prefecture, James Zumwalt, deputy chief of mission of the U.S. Embassy in Japan, said, "This is part of the transfer of U.S. military exercises to the Japanese mainland in order to reduce the burden on the people of Okinawa." He thus revealed that low-altitude flight exercises are expected to take place on mainland Japan, including Kagoshima, under an agreement between the Japanese government and the U.S., which are seeking to relocate the exercises.

Zumwalt made the above statement in answer to a question from Minami Nihon Shimbun at a seminar on defense issues in Fukuoka City (organized by the Ministry of Defense's Kyushu Defense Bureau). Zumwalt is the second-ranking official at the U.S. Embassy. He formerly served as vice consul at the Consulate General in Kobe and director of the State Department's Japan desk.

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Zumwalt revealed that he was informed by the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the anxiety among the people of Kagoshima about the low-altitude flights of U.S. military planes and has inquired directly with U.S. Forces Japan (USFJ). He said: "The Navy and the Marines are conducting exercises in various places in Kyushu" in order to lighten the burden on Okinawa.

Zumwalt further indicated that regular training in Japan, including low-altitude flights, is indispensable for the USFJ to maintain a certain level of deterrence in Japan and the surrounding areas.

However, he emphasized that "we make efforts not to fly over densely populated areas, schools, and hospitals" in consideration of the burden imposed on the residents near the training space. He also said that Japan and the U.S. will promote the exchange of information and "make efforts to minimize the burden on the Japanese people."

Since 2006, KC-130 air tankers and MC-130 special operations aircraft based in Futenma and Kadena in Okinawa have been spotted flying over the cities of Minami-satsuma and Hioki in Kagoshima Prefecture. Low-altitude flights by the MC-130s are considered to be indispensable for invasion operations to avoid detection by radar. Experts believe that such combat exercises are in preparation for a contingency on the Korean peninsula or ground operations in the Middle East.

(2) Ministerial Committee decides on Futenma policy without specifying deadline for selecting relocation site; GOJ to form working group of three ruling parties; FM Okada mulls U.S. visit on Dec. 16

ASAHI (Page 1) (Full)
Evening, December 15, 2009

Hiroshi Ito in Washington, Keiichi Kaneko

The Hatoyama cabinet held a meeting of its Ministerial Committee on Basic Policies, which includes the leaders of the three ruling parties, on the morning of Dec. 15. With regard to the relocation of the U.S. forces' Futenma Air Station (in Ginowan City, Okinawa), the Committee decided to create a working group of the three parties to reconsider the relocation site, with the designated relocation site

under the current plan, the coastal area of Henoko, Nago City still being considered as one option. The government has given up on choosing a relocation site within this year. Foreign Minister Katsuya Okada and others are expected to convey this decision to U.S. Ambassador to Japan John Roos at the Prime Minister's Official Residence in the afternoon.

Deputy Prime Minister and National Strategy Minister Naoto Kan of the Democratic Party of Japan, Social Democratic Party leader Mizuho Fukushima (state minister for consumer affairs, declining birthrate), People's New Party leader Shizuka Kamei (state minister for financial affairs, postal reform), and others attended the Ministerial Committee meeting. With regard to the deadline for selecting the relocation site, Chief Cabinet Secretary Hirofumi Hirano suggested May 2010, but Fukushima opposed the setting of any deadline, so this is not included in the three-party agreement reached at the Ministerial Committee meeting. It is believed that this deadline will be conveyed to the U.S. side in the negotiation

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process.

The government also indicated at the Ministerial Committee that expenditures relating to Futenma relocation will be earmarked in the FY10 budget and that the environmental impact survey in Henoko will continue. Hirano will take charge of the details of the three-party working group. One participant in the meeting said that, "Rather than giving priority to the thinking of the U.S., Japan, Okinawa, or the three-party coalition, we talked about how to make sure that things will work out for all four parties involved."

Meanwhile, it was learned that the U.S. side has been contacted for a possible visit by Foreign Minister Katsuya Okada on Dec. 16 to meet with Secretary of State Hillary Clinton to convey the Japanese government's policy to the U.S. side. However, coordination is still underway and it is unclear whether the U.S. side will consent to the visit. This was revealed by several sources on bilateral relations.

The U.S. government plans to make a final decision after adjusting Clinton's schedule. Since the policy decided upon by the Japanese government is not in line with the U.S.'s wishes, it intends to send Okada to the U.S. to minimize the backlash from the U.S. side.

Speaking about the government's policy to be conveyed to the U.S. on Dec. 15, Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama said: "After negotiations with the U.S. are complete, I will provide a full explanation to the people." He made this comment in response to a question from reporters in front of his official residential quarters.

(3) Naha District Court rules two protesters blocked helipad construction, but protests "allowable"

RYUKYU SHIMPO (Page 1) (Full)
December 12, 2009

In connection with the Okinawa Defense Bureau's provisional deposition against the obstruction of traffic by 14 residents in Takae, Higashi village, who have opposed the U.S. military's construction of a helipad in return for the reversion of part of its training field in northern Okinawa Prefecture, the Naha District Court (presiding judge Naoto Hirata) on Dec. 11 issued a ruling that the two men blocked (construction of the U.S. military helipad). The court pointed out that protests, including sit-ins, are allowed and respected to a certain extent. The court, however, turned down the Defense Bureau's claims against the remaining 12 residents.

The court ruled that the protesters had repeatedly blocked by force the construction of the helipad by (1) parking cars, (2) standing before construction vehicles, and (3) crawling under construction vehicles. Examining the 14 protesters' acts, the court ordered the two protesters not to block the construction of the helipad, including sit-ins, at the construction site, pointing out that the two men tried to block the construction by force and that the probability that they will continue blocking the construction is recognized.

Meanwhile, the court ruled that interpreting sit-ins, calls for halting construction, and protests as sabotage should be done with caution. It also pointed out that an act taken on the basis of one's political beliefs should be respected.

A group of lawyers will discuss on Dec. 12 whether the residents

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should file a complaint, while giving a modicum of praise to the ruling this time around.

(4) Yomitan Village rally protests fatal hit-an-run incident by U.S. Army staff sergeant

RYUKYU SHIMPO (Page 35) (Abridged)
December 15, 2009

A rally of the Yomitan Village people to protest the fatal hit-and-run incident by a U.S. soldier was held at the courtyard of the Yomitan Cultural Center on Dec. 13. The approximately 1,500 participants expressed their anger and frustration at the fact that the suspect U.S. staff sergeant has not been arrested more than one month after the incident and has not made himself available for questioning by the prefectural police.

After the rally, the participants marched to Torii Station, where the suspect is confined but is said to be performing his military duties as usual. The protesters cried out in anger through the fence in front of them: "Come out criminal!" and "Apologize to the victim!"

Yomitan Mayor Keizo Yasuda shouted furiously in front of the fence: "If you evade the issue, it will be the end of our relationship." He voiced strong criticism, saying that: "So far, we have been able to build a certain degree of friendship (with the U.S. forces), but this incident is absolutely unforgivable. Hand the culprit over to the Japanese police."

(5) U.S. to hold talks with NATO members on reviewing its tactical nuclear forces, including making changes to in-place weapons

MAINICHI (Page 7) (Full)
December 13, 2009

Yoshinori Fukushima, Brussels

The U.S. government has decided in principle to hold talks with other North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) members to discuss a review of the role of the U.S. tactical nuclear weapons deployed in Europe within the framework of the organization, a senior U.S. government official told the Mainichi Shimbun. The tactical nuclear forces cannot be reduced or removed without the agreement of the 28 NATO members. The handling of the tactical nuclear forces is likely to be discussed in the process of reviewing NATO's strategy.

The United States deployed several thousand tactical nuclear weapons in Europe during the Cold War for NATO to counter the Warsaw Pact, which was superior to NATO in terms of conventional forces. The number dramatically dropped after the end of the Cold War. But according to the Federation of American Scientists (FAS), there are still an estimated 150-240 weapons in Europe, including 70-90 in Italy, 50-90 in Turkey, and 10-20 each in Belgium, Germany, and the Netherlands.

In Europe there has been a political movement seeking the removal of tactical nuclear weapons since the inauguration in the United States of the Obama administration advocating a nuclear-free world. German Foreign Minister Guido Westerwelle requested in early November that the United States move its tactical nuclear weapons outside Germany, while urging Belgium and the Netherlands to fall in step with

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Germany.

"The United States is ready to hold talks (with European countries) and welcomes discussions (with them)," the senior U.S. government official said. "The nuclear weapons deployed in Europe play the role of contributing to the strategy and deterrence of NATO." He also emphatically said that changes to the in-place tactical nuclear forces, including their reduction and removal, can occur only when the 28 NATO members reach an agreement.

NATO's New Strategic Concept adopted in 1999 includes a policy of maintaining the tactical nuclear forces based in Europe at the minimum level. NATO has begun studying the next strategic concept to be adopted at the next summit in November 2010. There is a good chance that the subject of tactical nuclear arms will be taken up at next year's NATO summit, according to a NATO press officer.

Differences in views among NATO members

The Nuclear Posture Review (NPR), scheduled to be presented by the Obama administration to the U.S. Congress next February, and the future course of the U.S.-Russia nuclear arms reduction talks are likely to affect the trend of discussions. Serving as a comprehensive guideline for U.S. nuclear strategy, the NPR includes the positioning of its tactical nuclear forces.

Among the NATO members, there are differences in views on the efficacy of the United States' tactical nuclear forces. In Germany and the three Benelux countries situated in the middle of Europe, there are strong calls for the removal of tactical nuclear forces, regarding them as a relic of the Cold War. In contrast, Eastern European countries, which are alarmed by Russia, are in favor of the continued deployment of tactical nuclear weapons as a symbol of America's defense of Europe. Turkey is also reportedly concerned about the impact of the removal of tactical nuclear weapons. It seems to take time to integrate views among NATO members.

(6) Dwindling channels with China due to decrease in number of China's Japan hands

ASAHI (Page 2) (Full)
December 15, 2009

Upon arriving in Japan, Chinese Vice President Xi Jinping on Dec. 14 released a statement, which read, "I would like to meet the Emperor and Prime Minister Hatoyama and deepen our mutual trust and friendship." Chinese diplomatic sources are pinning high hopes on his meetings with Japan's key figures, with one saying, "Talks with a wide range of dignitaries have been set up. We want him to strengthen bilateral relations."

Having long served in local regions, Xi does not necessarily have deep connections with Japan. He visited Nagasaki and Okinawa in 2001 when he was serving as the head of the Fujian Province. However, he has few personal channels with Japan's political and business circles, according to a diplomatic source in Beijing.

President Hu Jintao, the supreme leader, in 1984 was in charge of an exchange project in which 3,000 Japanese young people were invited to China under General Secretary Hu Yaobang at the time, who was said to be pro-Japanese. President Hu during a press conference in May last year before his Japan visit, enthusiastically said, "Among

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my foreign friends, the number who are Japanese is the highest." He chose Japan as the destination for his first foreign trip in 1998 right after he took office as vice president. In comparison, Xi is said to have no special attachment to Japan, according to a Chinese Communist Party source.

Former Vice President Ceng Qingjiang, who had a wide range of personnel networks in Japanese political circles, has retired, and former Vice Premier Huang Ju, who once underwent technical training in Japan, has passed away. A Japanese diplomatic source pointed out that the number of Japan hands in the Chinese leadership and the government has decreased and their successors have yet to be trained.

The Japanese economy was robust in the 1980's, when President Hu was still among young top officials. Japan extended assistance and investment in China. Japan had a strong presence in China, which had just adopted a reform and open-door policy. Japanese films, TV dramas, and popular songs were widely accepted by Chinese people. Weak connections with Japan are apparently common to Post-Hu generation officials.

The number of officials who are knowledgeable about Japan is dwindling even in the Chinese Foreign Ministry. When bilateral relations deteriorated due to former Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi's visits to Yasukuni Shrine, China's Japan experts had served as safety valves in the event of a contingency, as a Japanese diplomatic source put it, mending the deteriorated relations using their own Japan connections.

However, Tang Jiaxuan (71), who served as foreign minister and state councilor (equivalent to vice premier), retired in March last year, and Vice Foreign Minister Wu Dawei (63), the chairman of the Six-Party Talks, is expected to step down next year. Former Ambassador to Japan Wang Yi (56) has left the Foreign Ministry. He is now the top official responsible for Taiwan policy.

The same Chinese Communist source stressed: "There is concern that China's Japan connections will further dwindle in the age of the post-Hu generation. We want Vice President Xi to build personal relationships of trust during his visit to Japan this time."

(7) Chief Cabinet Secretary Hirano fails to coordinate policymaking

NIKKEI (Page 2) (Slightly abridged)
December 12, 2009

It has become clearer that there is no coordinator in the policymaking process in the Hatoyama cabinet. The role of coordinating views among the ruling parties and cabinet ministers should be played by the chief cabinet secretary, but Hirofumi Hirano, who fills this post, has failed to exert his influence. In an effort to resolve conflicts among cabinet ministers over the next fiscal year's budget and other key issues, Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama yesterday met with the heads of the Social Democratic Party (SDP) and the People's New Party (PNP), junior partners of the coalition government led by the Democratic Party of Japan.

Hatoyama invited SDP head Mizuho Fukushima and PNP head Shizuka Kamei to a Japanese restaurant in Roppongi last night. It was the first time for the three party heads to have dinner together since the coalition government was launched in September.

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Over dinner the three party leaders agreed to confer on the relocation of the U.S. Marine Corps' Futenma Air Station in Okinawa, over which the SDP has demonstrated its own policy. In response to a call from the PNP, which succeeded in persuading the government to boost its additional economic stimulus package by 100 billion yen, they also decided to make use of special accounts to finance measures in the fiscal 2010 budget on a priority basis.

In policy coordination, however, the SDP and the PNP have placed importance on DPJ Secretary General Ichiro Ozawa. Some take the view that the ruling parties wield a veto in policymaking. And ministers continue to make contradictory remarks in the cabinet.

"Mr. Hirano is a dam," a senior ruling party official said. The official thinks that Hirano is responsible for causing the current chaotic situation. The chief cabinet secretary should be in charge of dealing with Diet affairs and coordinating policies with the ruling parties through discussion, but pending issues don't get past Hirano. Bearing this situation in mind, the official likened Hirano to a "dam."

Hirano himself has also made contradictory remarks. He said on Dec. 10 that it is impossible to fix the total amount of government bond issuance in the fiscal 2010 budget under the current situation. But

without batting an eyelash he withdrew the remark the next day, saying: "The prime minister told me to give a numerical figure without fail."

On how to secure financial resources for child care allowances, views differ among Health, Labor and Welfare Minister Akira Nagatsuma, Internal Affairs Minister Kazuhiro Haraguchi and State Minister for Declining Birthrate Fukushima. In a speech yesterday, Kamei also proposed setting an income ceiling for a child allowance. On the Futenma issue, concerned cabinet ministers also met with the prime minister yesterday. As seen from the case in which the government decided to resurrect additional benefits for single parents on welfare in response to a direct request by the welfare minister to the prime minister, cabinet ministers might begin to bring policy tasks to the prime minister in seeking his policy decisions.

(8) U.S. President delivers Nobel Peace Prize acceptance speech, underscoring that war is necessary

SHIMBUN AKAHATA (Page 7) (Abridged slightly)
December 12, 2009

The 2009 Nobel Peace Prize award ceremony took place in the Oslo City Hall on the afternoon of Dec. 10 (evening of the same day, Japan time). U.S. President Obama formally received the prize, earning high marks for his pursuit of a world free of nuclear weapons. However, the President dedicated a great deal of time in his acceptance speech to the legitimization of war, taking the use of force in situations such as the Afghanistan war for granted.

He also flaunted the U.S.'s military presence in the post-war period, saying, "The U.S. has been taking charge of global security for over 60 years" or "The U.S. resolve to defend the global security will never be undermined."

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The speech was full of paradoxes with the President, a Nobel Peace Prize winner, expounding on war while at the same time acknowledging that his nation is at war.

With the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan war in mind, President Obama as the Commander-in-Chief of a state that is engaged in two wars stressed, "There is evil in the world. The use of force is sometimes necessary."

He also called on U.S. allies to work together, saying, "The U.S. cannot act on its own." Citing the existence of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), he said, "Peace entails sacrifice. That is why NATO is needed."

He also underscored the urgency of pursuing the realization of a world free of nuclear weapons and addressing the promotion of nuclear non-proliferation. He said that the U.S. will lead the nuclear disarmament process. He also called on the international community to prevent countries like Iran and North Korea from deceiving the world.

President Obama underscored the rationalization of war on the occasion of the Peace Prize award ceremony. Japan's atomic-bomb survivors lodged a strong protest, saying that it is utterly wrong to justify war while pinning high hopes on a world free of nuclear weapons.

(9) Yomiuri-Gallup poll: Perception gap between Japanese, Americans on issues

YOMIURI (Page 12) (Full)
December 11, 2009

A recent joint public opinion survey of the Japanese and American public, conducted by the Yomiuri Shimbun and the Gallup Organization, a U.S. pollster, posted no substantial change in the relationship of mutual trust, which is the foundation of the bilateral alliance between Japan and the United States. However, the

Japan-U.S. relationship is now invisible under the Hatoyama government and is clearly at a serious crossroads.

Questions & Answers
(Figures shown in percentage)

Q: Do you trust any of the following organizations and public entities in particular in your country? If any, pick as many as you like.

Japan U.S.
Prime minister 48 ---
Diet 34 ---
Police, prosecutors 54 ---
Courts 66 ---
Self-Defense Forces 58 ---
Buddhist temples, Shinto shrines, churches 46 ---
Central government offices 25 ---
Local governments 46 ---
Schools 53 ---
Hospitals 68 ---
Newspapers 66 ---
Television 46 ---
Major corporations 30 ---

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Labor unions 32 ---
Other answers (O/A) 2 ---
Nothing in particular (NIP) 5 ---
No answer (N/A) 0 ---

Japan U.S.
President --- 56
Congress --- 37
Police, prosecutors --- 74
Courts --- 60
Armed services --- 89
Churches --- 76
Federal government offices --- 42
Local governments --- 57
Schools --- 69
Hospitals --- 80
Newspapers --- 50
Television --- 45
Major corporations --- 31
Labor unions --- 36
O/A --- 10
NIP --- 0
N/A --- ---

Q: Do you think Japan-U.S. relations are currently in good shape, or do you think Japan-U.S. relations are in bad shape?

Japan U.S.
Very good 2 8
Good 46 43
Can't say which 21 34
Bad 24 6
Very bad 2 2
N/A 4 6

Q: What do you think is the problem now between Japan and the U.S.?

Japan U.S.
Relationship of trust between the two countries' leaders 10 9
Response to trade, economic issues 18 27
U.S. force realignment in Japan 31 5
Response to North Korea 13 19
Cooperation in the war on terror 8 12
Response to global warming 17 14
O/A 0 0
NIP 1 2
N/A 3 12

Q: Do you trust the U.S.?

Japan U.S.
Yes, very much 7 ---
Yes, somewhat 42 ---
No, not very much 34 ---
No, not at all 7 ---
N/A 11 ---

Q: Do you trust Japan?

Japan U.S.
Yes, very much --- 14
Yes, somewhat --- 52

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No, not very much --- 20
No, not at all --- 11
N/A --- 3

Q: This September, Democratic Party of Japan President Hatoyama was elected prime minister. Do you think Japan-U.S. relations will improve, worsen, or remain unchanged under his government?

Japan U.S.
Improve greatly 1 3
Improve 16 27
Remain unchanged 63 42
Worsen 15 8
Worsen greatly 1 4
N/A 4 14

Q: If there is a country or area that you think will become a military threat to your country, pick as many as you like from among those listed below.

Japan U.S.
U.S. 23 ---
Japan --- 20
South Korea 16 25
China 64 56
ASEAN 12 28
EU 10 14
Russia 40 42
Taiwan 6 12
North Korea 81 75
India 14 12
Middle East 33 81
Oceania 5 5
Africa 4 15
Central and South America 8 20
O/A 0 19
NIP 6 3
N/A 3 1

(Note) ASEAN = Association of Southeast Asian Nations; EU = European Union; Oceania = Australia, New Zealand, etc.

Q: Do you think the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty contributes to security in the Asia-Pacific region?

Japan U.S.
Yes, very much 25 13
Yes, somewhat 50 57
No, not very much 12 13
No, not at all 2 5
N/A 12 11

Q: The Hatoyama government is seeking to review the current plan to relocate the U.S. military's Futenma airfield in Okinawa Prefecture. Do you think it would be better to review it substantially, make only minor changes, or not change it at all?

Japan U.S.
Review it substantially 33 12
Make minor changes 35 28
Not change it at all 22 39
N/A 10 20

Q: Do you support President Obama's advocacy of a world without nuclear weapons?

Japan U.S.
Yes 92 46
Yes to a certain degree 4 17
No to a certain degree 1 7
No 2 28
N/A 1 2

Q: The Nobel Peace Prize will be awarded to President Obama for his efforts to abolish all nuclear weapons. Do you think he deserves to be awarded?

Japan U.S.
Yes 47 35
No 44 62
N/A 10 3

Q: Japan has sent Maritime Self-Defense Force vessels to the Indian Ocean, where they are refueling multinational force ships. The Hatoyama government will end this refueling mission by next January when the law expires. Do you approve of ending the refueling activities?

Japan U.S.
Yes 56 20
No 32 71
N/A 12 9

Q: (Only for those who answered "yes" to the foregoing question) The Hatoyama government plans to end the refueling mission and switch to civilian assistance in Afghanistan, such as agricultural guidance and vocational training. Do you approve of this switchover to civilian aid, or would you approve of it depending on the local security situation?

Japan U.S.
Yes 32 26
Yes, depending on the local security situation 56 34
No 9 39
O/A 0 ---
N/A 4 1

Q: What do you think the Japanese and U.S. governments should work together to address on a priority basis among issues over North Korea? If any, pick as many as you like from among those listed.

Japan U.S.
Stop North Korea from developing nuclear weapons 96 92
Stop North Korea from developing and launching missiles 94 89
Resolve the issue of Japanese nationals abducted to North Korea 93 76
Normalize diplomatic relations between Japan and North Korea 51 ---
Normalize diplomatic relations between the U.S. and North Korea --- 74
Extend economic cooperation to North Korea 28 30
Change North Korea's political, economic systems 57 63
O/A 0 5
NIP 0 3
N/A 1 ---

Q: Do you think North Korea will abandon its nuclear weapons and nuclear development programs at the Six-Party Talks among Japan, the U.S., South Korea, China, Russia, and North Korea?

Japan U.S.
Yes 11 2
Yes to a certain degree 9 8
No to a certain degree 16 22

No 55 65
N/A 9 3

Q: Do you think Japan-China relations are currently in good shape?

Japan U.S.
Very good 1 ---
Good 42 ---
Can't say which 21 ---
Bad 29 ---
Very bad 2 ---
N/A 5 ---

Q: Do you think U.S.-China relations are currently in good shape?

Japan U.S.
Very good --- 3
Good --- 31
Can't say which --- 50
Bad --- 11
Very bad --- 2
N/A --- 2

Q: Do you trust China?

Japan U.S.
Yes, very much 2 3
Yes, somewhat 18 39
No, not very much 47 30
No, not at all 26 26
N/A 7 2

Q: Do you think the U.S. or China will be more important to Japan on the political front in the future?

Japan U.S.
U.S. 52 ---
China 36 ---
Both countries 6 ---
N/A 6 ---

Q: Do you think Japan or China will be more important to the U.S. on the political front in the future?

Japan U.S.
Japan --- 36
China --- 57
Both countries --- 1
N/A --- 6

Q: Do you think the U.S. or will be more important to Japan on the economic front in the future?

Japan U.S.

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U.S. 18 ---
China 73 ---
Both countries 3 ---
N/A 6 ---

Q: Do you think Japan or China will be more important to the U.S. on the economic front in the future?

Japan U.S.
Japan --- 25
China --- 69
Both countries --- 1
N/A --- 6

Q: Prime Minister Hatoyama has advocated building an East Asian Community to step up multilateral cooperation in economic and other areas centering on Japan, China, and South Korea. Do you approve of this initiative?

Japan U.S.

Yes, very much 30 12
Yes, somewhat 46 58
No, not very much 10 15
No, not at all 5 11
N/A 9 4

Q: Concerning greenhouse gases that cause global warming, Japan has set a high goal to reduce 25 PERCENT of its greenhouse gas emissions from 1990 levels by 2020. Do you approve of this goal?

Japan U.S.
Yes, very much 40 25
Yes, somewhat 36 47
No, not very much 13 12
No, not at all 8 13
N/A 3 4

Polling methodology: The survey was conducted over the telephone on a computer-aided random digit dialing (RDD) basis both in Japan and in the U.S.

Japan
Date of survey: Nov. 20-23.
Subjects of survey: Voting population aged 20 and over.
Number of valid respondents: 1,024 persons.
Breakdown of respondents: Male-47 PERCENT , female-53 PERCENT .

U.S.
Date of survey: Nov. 14-20.
Subjects of survey: Voting population aged 18 and over.
Number of valid respondents: 1,044 persons.
Breakdown of respondents: Male-48 PERCENT , female-52 PERCENT .

(10) Declining number of students going to U.S. to study; down by 10,000 over 10 years

ASAHI (Top play) (Full)
Evening, December 11, 2009

Mariko Nakamura, Kozue Hayama

It used to be that studying abroad meant going to the U.S. to study.

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The number of Japanese students going to the U.S. to study peaked at 47,000 in 1997 and has continued to decline. The number dropped to 34,000 in 2007. While the main factor is that internationalization has led students to develop an interest in other countries, there is an increasing number of the so-called "herbivorous" (soshokukei, a term for timid people, especially males) students who are intimidated by the image of America as a "country full of vitality" and who prefer countries where they can go at their own pace.

The U.S. College and University Fair is held in Tokyo every autumn. It is an annual event organized by an American educational institution and sponsored by the U.S. Embassy. However, the response of Japanese students has been lukewarm. There were over 1,000 participants in 2007, but last year, less than 700 people showed up. The one held this year in Akihabara attracted only 450 participants.

The U.S. Embassy is also alarmed by the drop in the number of students from Japan. An event called the "America Study Abroad Expo" was held at the Akasaka Sacas, a popular spot in Akasaka, Tokyo, last May, featuring not only speeches by people who studied in the U.S. and information on U.S. universities but also stalls selling American food and concerts of blues and rock music.

According to the statistics of the Ministry of Education and other organizations, the number of Japanese students going abroad to study is actually on the rise, totaling about 80,000 in 2005, which is 1.3 times the number 10 years ago. The U.S. appears to be losing its relative popularity. Looking at the figures by country, while 75 percent of the students went to the U.S. in 1997, less than 50 percent did so in 2005. In contrast, the number of students going to the Asian countries is increasing. In particular, nearly 19,000

students went to China in 2005, which is more than twice the number 10 years ago.

However, many officials of organizations involved with study-abroad programs note that behind the decline in students going to America is the change in the students' "disposition."

According to Naomi Tagashira, an adviser at the Information Center for International Education of the Japan Student Services Organization, many students who want to study abroad to learn English have the impression that there is "fierce competition" in the U.S. and choose Canada or Australia where they can "study at leisure in a relaxed way." There are also many cases where students purposely choose the Scandinavian countries and elsewhere where English is not the native language because "they are not confident that they can follow rapidly spoken English." Tagashira says that many of them ask during the preparatory stage if it is possible to communicate in Japanese with the foreign university or if the university has Japanese staff.

In its fourth report, issued last May, the government's Meeting on Education Rebuilding points out that "young people may have become reluctant to plunge into the outside world."

The Japan-U.S. Educational Commission (Chiyoda Ward, Tokyo), which serves as the contact organization for studying in the U.S., is holding various events to remove the "hurdles." One program for students who lack confidence is the "Complete Survival Seminars for Studying in the U.S." The program consists of mock classes conducted in English. Participants also experience simulated situations of

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culture shock and stress.

David Satterwhite, executive director of the Japan-U.S. Educational Commission, says: "When you think of the Japan-U.S. relationship, I am concerned about the damage over a span of 20 or 30 years. I would like to tell Japanese students to have confidence."

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